Purchasing of Uranium and nuclear reactors

1866. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the amount paid or payable to the United States of America (USA) for the purpose of buying Uranium and reactors following Indo-US nuclear deal;

(b) whether any quantity has been received by India from USA or from any other country during the current year;

(c) whether Government has placed any order with USA or any other country for supply of Uranium or reactor; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) to (d) International agreements on nuclear co-operation have just been concluded with the USA, France and Russian Federation for co-operation in the nuclear field. Commercial agreements for supply of nuclear power reactors with potential vendors are yet to be negotiated. No orders have been placed and no payment has been made.

Quota in coal mine blocks

1867. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is giving any share or quota to the tribal people in the coal mine blocks in the scheduled areas especially in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last four years; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply at (a) above.

(c) As per the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 only a company registered under the Indian Companies Act, 1956 is eligible for allocation of coal block for captive purpose for approved end-uses such as generation of power, production of cement, iron and steel, syn-gas and coal liquefaction.

Deocha-Pachami coal reserve

1868. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the distinctive features of the Deocha-Pachami coal reserve in Birbhum district in West Bengal;

(b) whether a Joint Venture (JV) has been formed between National Mining Development Corporation (NMDC) and a West Bengal Government undertaking for mining coal in Deocha-Pachami;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the process followed for entrusting the mining to the JV;

(e) the salient details of technological expertise essential for exploration of coal in this reserve *vis-a-vis* those/coal mining experience possessed by JV partners;

(f) in what manner the same compared to those of Coal India Ltd. (CIL); and

(g) the reasons for keeping CIL out of this venture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA): (a) As per the Geological Report (based on Regional Exploration) prepared by Geological Survey of India, the Barakar formation of Deocha-Pachami area contains four thick seam-zones besides many local coal seams. The seam-zones vary in thickness from 9 metre to 80 metre containing non-coking, high moisture (1.2% to 7.5%), high ash (22.9% to 52.4%) coal of C to G grade mostly in 300 to 1200m depth range. The 'indicated' reserve of coal has been assessed as 2026 million tonnes. The area is covered by 3 to 5 layers of basalt flows (Rajmahal traps) having total thickness of about 52 to 195 metres.

(b) to (d) Deocha-Pachami coal block has been identified as one of the captive blocks and is yet to be allocated. As such there is no question of formation of Joint Venture.

(e) Exploration for coal deposits of Deocha-Pachami Block will be a routine coal exploration except for drilling through thick cover of basalt which is a very hard rock.

(f) to (g) Do not arise in view of reply given to part (b) to (d) above.

Theft/illegal mining of coal

1869. SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state the extent of theft/illegal mining of coal in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA): As theft/illegal mining of coal is carried out stealthily and clandestinely, it is not feasible to specify the exact quantum of coal stolen and losses incurred on account of the same.

However, as per regular raids conducted by security personnel as well as joint raids by Coal India Ltd. and its subsidiaries with the law and order authorities of the concerned State Governments, the combined loss of 31635 tonnes (approx.) coal valuing Rs. 4.16 crore (approx.) in 2007-08 had occurred due to theft and illegal mining. In 2008-09 (till Oct.'08), the loss reported was to the tune of 18,540 tonnes coal valuing approximately Rs. 2.5 crore.

Allocation of coal from WCL

1870. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the criterion for allocation of coal to a State from the Western Collieries Ltd. (WCL);

(b) whether it is a fact that Gujarat State is allocated coal from the eastern coal belt;